



## **H.R. 1114 – Alaska Water Resources Act of 2007**

### **Floor Situation**

H.R. 1114 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Don Young (R-AK) on February 16, 2007, and was reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on May 2, 2007.

H.R. 1114 is expected to be considered on the floor on May 7, 2007.

### **Summary**

H.R. 1114 Authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study, within the next 10 years that includes:

- A survey of accessible water supplies, including aquifers, on the Kenai Peninsula and in the Municipality of Anchorage, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, the city of Fairbanks, and the Fairbanks Northstar Borough;
- A survey of water treatment needs and technologies, including desalination, applicable to the water resources of the State; and
- A review of the need for enhancement of the stream flow information collected by the United States Geological Survey in the State relating to critical water needs in areas such as infrastructure risks to State transportation, flood forecasting, resource extraction; and fire management.

H.R.114 requires the Department of the Interior to report to Congress on the results of the study within 2 years of the date of the enactment of this Act.

### **Background**

Alaska has more than 3 million lakes, more than 12,000 rivers, along with thousands of streams, creeks, and ponds. Combined, these bodies of water comprise approximately one-third of all the fresh water found in the United States.

Alaska has fewer than 100 stream gauging stations operated by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).

Water for rural Alaska towns comes mostly from surface water sources which are prone to freezing, resulting in both supply and storage problems. Surface water sources are also vulnerable to water-borne contaminants, including wildlife waste, human waste from inadequate sewage treatment facilities, and natural mineral deposits.

There is limited knowledge of the nature and extent of the aquifers that support groundwater supplies in Alaska, a problem exacerbated by the presence of extensive permafrost. According to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, the State has about 16,000 homes in 71 Native villages that are not served by piped water or enclosed water haul systems. There are still 55 villages in Alaska where up to 29 percent of the residents are not served by sanitary water systems, with more than 60 percent of residents not being served in 16 villages.

**Cost**

At the time of publication The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) did not have a cost estimate available for H.R. 1114.

**Staff Contact**

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